

(b) Supplies or services tendered by contractors meet contract requirements;

(c) Government contract quality assurance is conducted before acceptance (except as otherwise provided in this part), by or under the direction of Government personnel;

(d) No contract precludes the Government from performing inspection;

(e) Nonconforming supplies or services are rejected, except as otherwise provided in 46.407;

(f) Contracts for commercial items shall rely on a contractor's existing quality assurance system as a substitute for compliance with Government inspection and testing before tender for acceptance unless customary market practices for the commercial item being acquired permit in-process inspection (Section 8002 of Public Law 103-355). Any in-process inspection by the Government shall be conducted in a manner consistent with commercial practice; and

(g) The quality assurance and acceptance services of other agencies are used when this will be effective, economical, or otherwise in the Government's interest (see subpart 42.1.)

[48 FR 42415, Sept. 19, 1983, as amended at 60 FR 48249, Sept. 18, 1995]

46.103 Contracting office responsibilities.

Contracting offices are responsible for—

(a) Receiving from the activity responsible for technical requirements any specifications for inspection, testing, and other contract quality requirements essential to ensure the integrity of the supplies or services (the activity responsible for technical requirements is responsible for prescribing such inspection, testing, and other contract quality requirements);

(b) Including in solicitations and contracts the appropriate requirements for the contractor's control of quality for the supplies or services to be acquired;

(c) Issuing any necessary instructions to the cognizant contract administration office and acting on recommendations submitted by that office (see 42.301 and 46.104(f));

(d) When contract administration is retained (see 42.203), verifying that the

contractor fulfills the contract quality requirements; and

(e) Ensuring that nonconformances are identified, and establishing the significance of a nonconformance when considering the acceptability of supplies or services which do not meet contract requirements.

[48 FR 42415, Sept. 19, 1983, as amended at 61 FR 31663, June 20, 1996]

46.104 Contract administration office responsibilities.

When a contract is assigned for administration to the contract administration office cognizant of the contractor's plant, that office, unless specified otherwise, shall—

(a) Develop and apply efficient procedures for performing Government contract quality assurance actions under the contract in accordance with the written direction of the contracting office;

(b) Perform all actions necessary to verify whether the supplies or services conform to contract quality requirements;

(c) Maintain, as part of the performance records of the contract, suitable records reflecting—

(1) The nature of Government contract quality assurance actions, including, when appropriate, the number of observations made and the number and type of defects; and

(2) Decisions regarding the acceptability of the products, the processes, and the requirements, as well as action to correct defects.

(d) Implement any specific written instructions from the contracting office;

(e) Report to the contracting office any defects observed in design or technical requirements, including contract quality requirements; and

(f) Recommend any changes necessary to the contract, specifications, instructions, or other requirements that will provide more effective operations or eliminate unnecessary costs (see 42.102(e) and 46.103(c)).

46.105 Contractor responsibilities.

(a) The contractor is responsible for carrying out its obligations under the contract by—

(1) Controlling the quality of supplies or services;

(2) Tendering to the Government for acceptance only those supplies or services that conform to contract requirements;

(3) Ensuring that vendors or suppliers of raw materials, parts, components, subassemblies, etc., have an acceptable quality control system; and

(4) Maintaining substantiating evidence, when required by the contract, that the supplies or services conform to contract quality requirements, and furnishing such information to the Government as required.

(b) The contractor may be required to provide and maintain an inspection system or program for the control of quality that is acceptable to the Government (see 46.202).

(c) The control of quality by the contractor may relate to, but is not limited to—

(1) Manufacturing processes, to ensure that the product is produced to, and meets, the contract's technical requirements;

(2) Drawings, specifications, and engineering changes, to ensure that manufacturing methods and operations meet the contract's technical requirements;

(3) Testing and examination, to ensure that practices and equipment provide the means for optimum evaluation of the characteristics subject to inspection;

(4) Reliability and maintainability assessment (life, endurance, and continued readiness);

(5) Fabrication and delivery of products, to ensure that only conforming products are tendered to the Government;

(6) Technical documentation, including drawings, specifications, handbooks, manuals, and other technical publications;

(7) Preservation, packaging, packing, and marking; and

(8) Procedures and processes for services to ensure that services meet contract performance requirements.

(d) The contractor is responsible for performing all inspections and test required by the contract except those

specifically reserved for performance by the Government (see 46.201(c)).

[48 FR 42415, Sept. 19, 1983, as amended at 55 FR 38517, Sept. 18, 1990]

Subpart 46.2—Contract Quality Requirements

46.201 General.

(a) The contracting officer shall include in the solicitation and contract the appropriate quality requirements. The type and extent of contract quality requirements needed depends on the particular acquisition and may range from inspection at time of acceptance to a requirement for the contractor's implementation of a comprehensive program for controlling quality.

(b) As feasible, solicitations and contracts may provide for alternative, but substantially equivalent, inspection methods to obtain wide competition and low cost. The contracting officer may also authorize contractor-recommended alternatives when in the Government's interest and approved by the activity responsible for technical requirements.

(c) Although contracts generally make contractors responsible for performing inspection before tendering supplies to the Government, there are situations in which contracts will provide for specialized inspections to be performed solely by the Government. Among situations of this kind are—

(1) Tests that require use of specialized test equipment or facilities not ordinarily available in suppliers' plants or commercial laboratories (e.g., ballistic testing of ammunition, unusual environmental tests, and simulated service tests); and

(2) Contracts that require Government testing for first article approval (see subpart 9.3).

(d) Except as otherwise specified by the contract, required contractor testing may be performed in the contractor's or subcontractor's laboratory or testing facility, or in any other laboratory or testing facility acceptable to the Government.